

Desire by Tormentor488

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Summary: Richie and Beverly are forgetting everything. They're painfully aware of it, too.

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It was Autumn. October of 1958. The evil which wouldn't return for nearly three decades had been put to rest.

And they were already forgetting it.

The seven of them had never gotten together since taking the blood oath. Sometimes five of them. More rarely, six. But never that

(lucky)

seven.

Richie and Beverly sat just beside the bank of the Kenduskeag. Idly, they listened to it flow, passing a cigarette while they did so. A drag or two before sharing it again. The tip was a dull glow, much like the evening sky. Pink with accents of purple. Smokey clouds smudged it.

Richie was taking another puff before Beverly spoke up. He almost wished she hadn't. The warm sting in his lungs felt good against the crisp Fall air. He wanted to savor it.

"The mark on my palm is gone," was all she said. Richie almost flinched. Both because he didn't want to hear it and partially because he realized he'd forgotten it. He hated that feeling. Worryingly, he wondered if he'd ever remember it at all if she hadn't reminded him.

"Mine too..." His voice was devoid of its usual bullshittery. He didn't even need to- nor want to- look at his hand. He'd come to the realization maybe a month beforehand.

"I'd swear, though... That Stan must have cut them deep enough to scar."

"Bill," he falsely corrected her, having already forgotten. It made Beverly realize she wasn't certain herself. "Bill did it. He's the one who made us swear, remember?"

"You're right..." And just like that, her minded erroneously "corrected" its memory. Suddenly it was Bill who found the Coke bottle and

smashed it. Cutting their palms. "And I think... I think that might be the problem..." Her voice was uneven. Richie stole a sideways glance at her. She was staring at the shifting surface of the Kenduskeag.

"Do..." There was a struggle to make himself say what he wanted to. His throat was a dry, painful thing. "Do you remember what the oath was for?"

"Richie, I'm scared." Her voice had grown more urgent now. While he wanted to reassure her, he was growing frightened himself. Shakily, he took a final drag on the cigarette. Praying it might ease his nerves.

"Bev-"

"I forgot Eddie's name the other day," she choked on a sob. "And I can't remember Bill's last name. I don't know where you live-" Richie's panic swelled with everything she was saying. Because he realized- if even for a horrifying moment- that he didn't know who the hell Ben was. It returned to him, but it took her reminder. Again.

"And even while we've been sitting here, Richie. I feel like your name's getting fainter in my mind all the time. Even when you're right next to me." Beverly trembled. A stray tear escaped her shimmering eyes. She stood up, the panic and sadness finally overwhelming her. Curiously, Richie watched her clutch her head, as if she developed a bitch of a migraine. Or maybe she was willing herself to remember. More desperately, he thought, maybe she was trying to hold on to what was left.

"I love all of you! I don't want to forget!"

"Christ. Beverly-" Richie sprang awkwardly to his feet and nearly tripped. His legs had nearly fallen asleep. He wrapped an arm around her and patted her back, trying to ease her anxiety.

"Everything, Ah say, Ah say, everythang's goan be fine," he did one of his crummy impressions to lighten the mood. Truthfully, he was feeling it even less than usual. In the back of his mind, he wasn't sure why, he felt almost certain they HAD to forget.

Beverly didn't laugh. "You don't really believe that, do you?" Cruelly,

through whatever power it was that bound them, he could sense they all felt it. Not just Beverly and himself. He knew Bill, Stan, Eddie... The rest. They were forgetting it all, too. And they were all aware of it.

Richie's mouth was dry and hot with anxiety. His eyes felt like miserable weights in his skull. Earlier, he had wondered why he and Beverly decided to come down to the Barrens again. But he felt like maybe he'd known all along now. It was wordless. They said nothing to each other. Unspoken, after school had ended. It was why he didn't joke much along the way. It was why they sat in a general silence for hours.

Again, Richie did his best to avoid it. Like turning his head away from the oncoming train. "You might not believe me. Maybe not today. Maybe not tomorrah, but one'a these days-" He was doing an awful Humphrey Bogart.

"Richie!" Beverly scolded him. Her eyes were as hot and fierce as her hair. "Beep-fucking-beep."

"What am I... What should I say, Bev?" He whispered defeatedly. Though he promised himself he wouldn't, his eyes were thick with the glaze of tears. If he wasn't careful, he might break too.

Beverly kissed him. It was hot and wet from her crying. It felt so vulnerable against the chill of the October air. He could taste and smell the cigarette on her breath, but he welcomed it. It was a passionate kiss, but it was also a desperate kiss.

Desire.

Like in the tunnels below Derry. But even that was being erased.

Richie ran his hand through the fire of her hair. Then, along her smooth jaw line which worked as their tongues mingled.

Beverly traced his chest with her hands, not at all shy about what she was doing. Their breathing was wounded and ragged. Full of love but also fear and mourning. Mourning of the inevitable.

"I love..." She moaned into the kiss before gently pulling back. Her

eyes were half-open. Her expression was drunk with longing. "I love you, Richie." And she did. She loved all six of them. In their own ways.

"I love you..." He trailed off. His breath hitched. He'd forgotten her fucking name. Not because he didn't care. He cared more than his adolescent heart could bear. Maybe that was the worst of it. A low pained moan escaped him. He sagged into Beverly's arms, finally allowing himself to cry too.

She buried her head in his shoulder, and he could feel the warmth bleeding into his shirt. She was silently crying along with him.

"It's okay... It's okay..."

"I- I can't remember-"

"Beverly..." She tried to keep her voice steady. Trying to hide the hurt of him not knowing.

Of course. How could he ever have forgotten. It seemed so obvious now. And even with that renewed knowledge, it seemed to fade in his mind. Not forgotten, but weaker. Like ink fading from an old notebook. Decades old.

This intensified Richie's anguish. It swelled into a wicked flame in his chest and threatened to destroy him. The only thing keeping him tethered was this girl, with a name he frantically tried to cling on to.

Beverly didn't have the heart- nor the strength- to mention she couldn't remember how they had met. Something she had been certain of just that morning.

They stood in embrace for a long time. Until the sky bled out to black. Shimmering eyes from the heavens looked down upon them. Until their own shimmering eyes met again and they shared more kisses. Until more memories faded and a friend or two were fully forgotten. All without their knowledge.

Richie was on top of her. For what he didn't realize was the second time.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes..." Her hands wove into his.

Their broken breath warmed the chilled night air. Small specters of heat and wanting. They swelled and grew visible before fading into the darkness, where their memories would soon join them.

"It can't touch desire..." She stroked his cheek.

"No," he smiled solemnly. "Not desire."